

# HISTORY

## America's Cup & J-Class

The tradition of America's Cup races began in 1851 when the schooner *America* defeated 15 British yachts to win the Round the Island Race in Cowes. Between then and the Second World War, races for the America's Cup were held on 16 occasions.

Leading businessmen such as Sir Thomas Lipton, Thomas Sopwith and Harold S. Vanderbilt went to extremes and spent huge sums of money in order to try and win the ornate trophy known affectionately as the Old Mug. Those who succeeded took on the role of *defender*, waiting until the other J-Classers determined who would be the next *challenger*. Due to the high stakes and immense public interest the fight was not always fair, and many protests had to be evaluated by the New York Yacht Club.

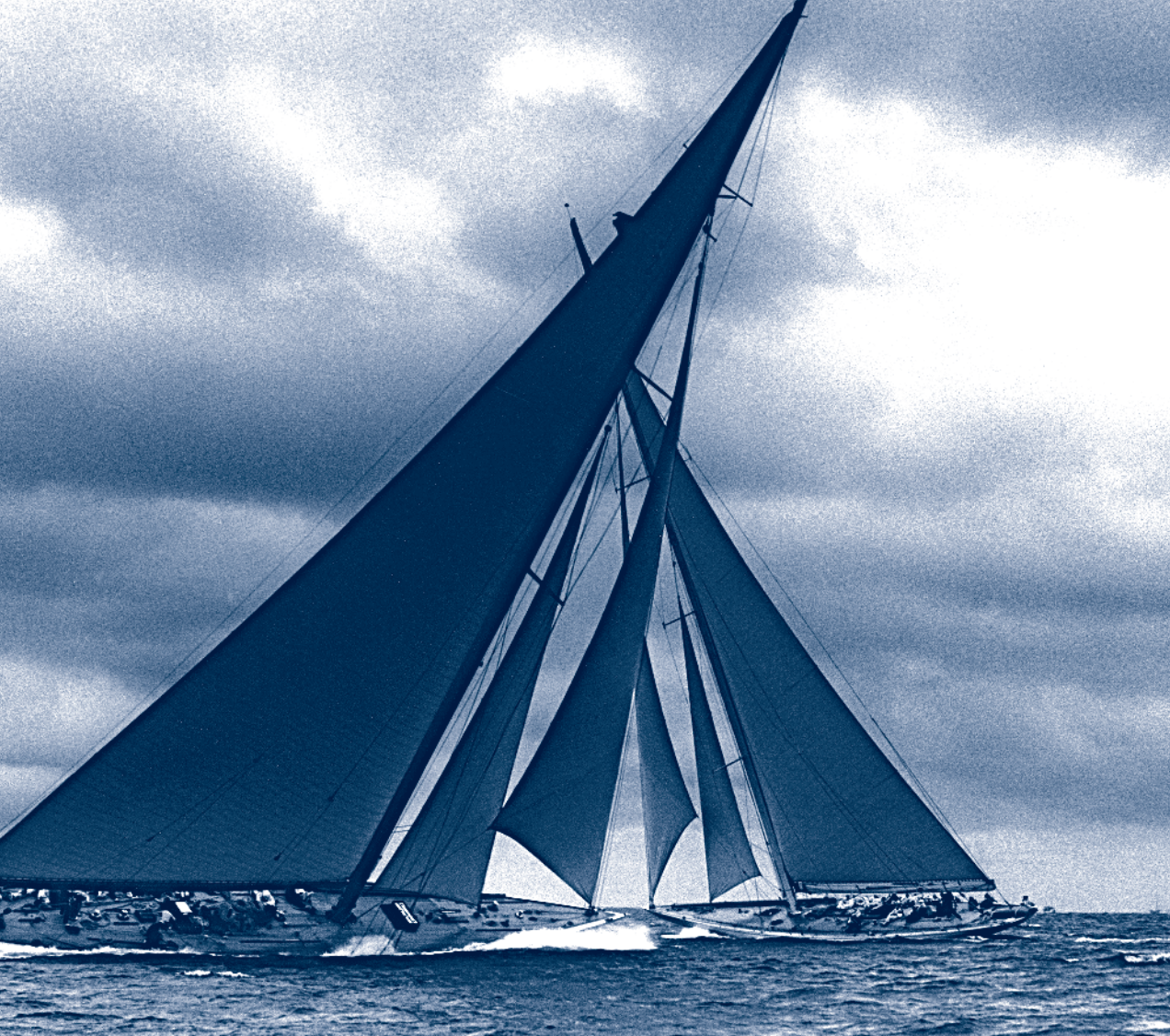
In these days the America's Cup remained a battle between American and British yachts. After the Universal Rule was established in 1930 the participants were J-Class yachts with a waterline length from 75 to 87 feet and a draught of up to 15 feet. It was this Universal Rule, developed by Nat Herreshoff, which established a J-Class with more or less similar yachts categorised in one class.

J-Class yachts competed for the America's Cup in 1930, 1934 and 1937. Although the America's Cup recommenced in the 1950s, the heyday of the J-Class was over and it would be more than a half a century before they raced again. The majestic yachts of the 1930s were either scrapped or used as house boats in the mud of the Hamble River in England.

*Rainbow, Endeavour, Ranger, Endeavour II and Yankee compete in the 1937 preliminary race*







*Rainbow crossing tacks with  
Yankee at NYYC cruise in 1934*

## GREAT DESIGNS, GREATER AMBITIONS

The J-Class era also saw some of the greatest names in design pulling out all the stops to draw yachts that would perform to the very best of their potential. Men such as William Starling Burgess, Charles Ernest Nicholson, Frank Cabot Paine, Olin Stephens and Lewis Francis Herreshoff (the son of Nat Herreshoff) became legends in their lifetime. Not all the designs committed to paper actually saw the light of day in terms of construction. One of the most famous examples of unfulfilled potential must be the J-Class yacht by Swedish designer Tore Holm from 1937. Holm was renowned for his Meter Class designs in the 1930s but few people knew that he had also drawn a quite sensational template for a racing J that could beat all others.



*As a houseboat in the Hamble river*

The design was initially rediscovered in 1999 by John Lammerts van Bueren who was seeking the original draughts of one of Holm's international 8-Metre yachts called Gagg. Travelling to Sweden, John met Birgitta Holm and helped arrange for all her father's archives to be transferred to Stockholm Maritime Museum. While perusing this priceless collection he came across plans marked KSSS J-Bat'. The lines, sail and construction plans were all in place for a stunning design that few eyes had ever seen. Although close to disintegration, the plans were carefully copied and now, almost three quarters of a century since they were first devised, they are coming to life.

*Hoisting the mainsail on Endeavour*

*Designer Tore Holm*



*Left to right: Some memorable  
men from the 30's, Olin & Rod  
Stephens, Harold S. Vanderbilt,  
William Starling Burgess and  
Frank C. Paine*



*Crew on deck Rainbow*





THE J-CLASS REVIVAL

The survival of the J-Class can be largely attributed to Richard Amos who bought *Endeavour* in the 1980s and started a restoration. The project was then taken over by Elizabeth Meyer, who transported *Endeavour* to the Royal Huisman yard in the Netherlands for a comprehensive refit. The renowned naval architect Gerard Dijkstra supervised this enormous undertaking, which was completed in 1989.

Dijkstra and his team also went on to oversee the restoration of two other famous Js, *Velsheda* and *Shamrock V*.

The J-Class Association was established in the 1990s and in 2005 took two major decisions in order to stimulate the further growth of the class:

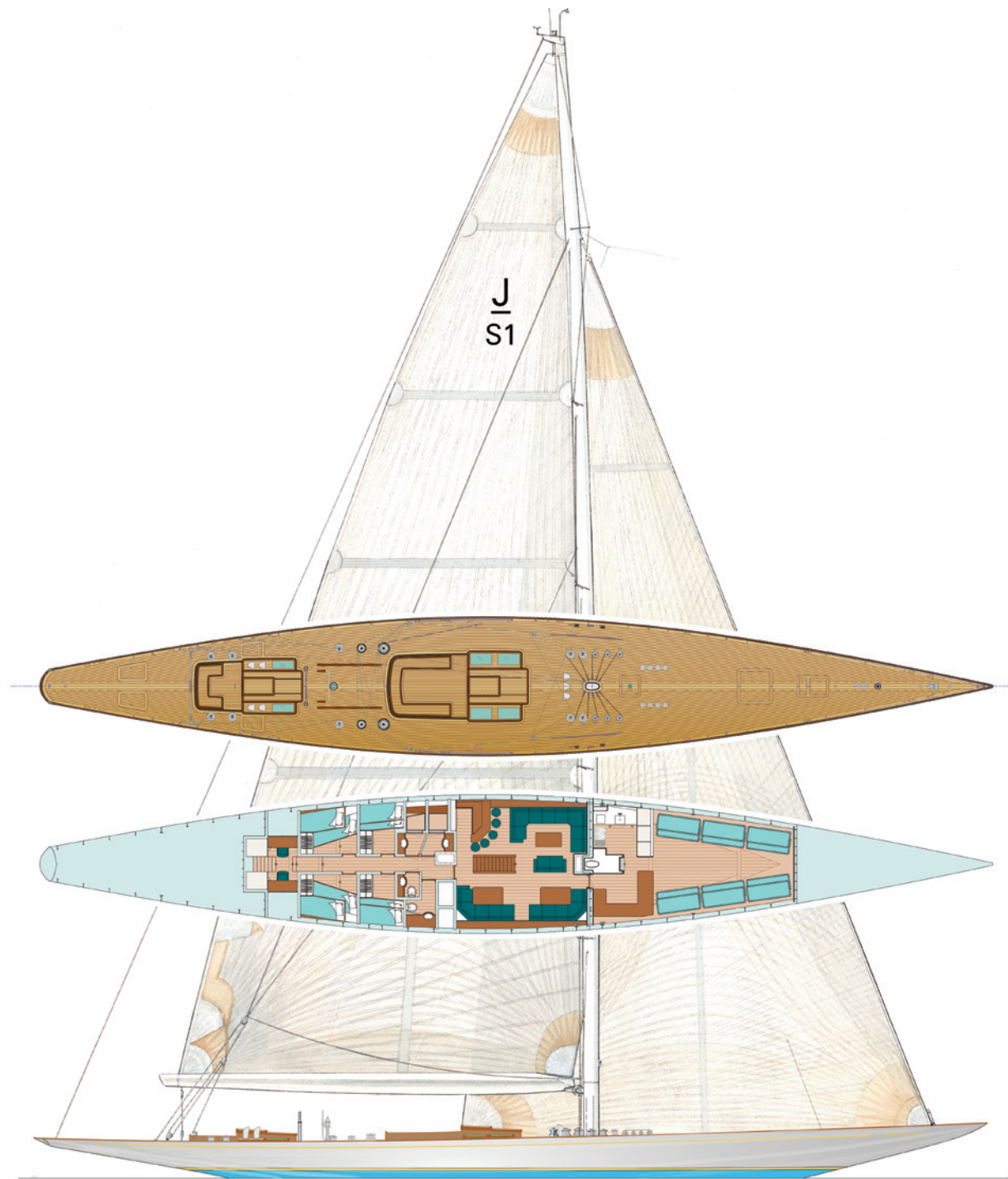


1. Construction was now allowed in aluminium.
2. With the help of Gerard Dijkstra, a new handicap system was developed that would allow 'old' and new J-Class yachts to race competitively against each other.

A condition of the system is that new yachts are built based on existing designs from the 1930s, including those of yachts that were never built, as long as the original lines plan is applied.

*Ranger and Velsheda max performance during Antigua Classic Week 2004*





## THE NEW SVEA

Since the establishment of the J-Class Association in 2000 there have been several possible proposals for bringing this outstanding design to reality but only recently have the copyright of the original plans came into new ownership. New line plans for the original design have been completed by Hoek Design in the Netherlands and were fully approved by the J-Class Association in 2009. The yacht has now been commissioned by a Dutch syndicate.

The hull proved to be one of the fastest upwind during Andre Hoek's research program and *Svea* is sure to be among the top new contenders on boat speed and handicap. At 144' 6" overall she will certainly be among the longest.

Everything possible has been done to optimise performance. A two-metre long aluminium model was built to assess her lines and extensive research carried out on her aluminium structure using finite element 3D modelling techniques. Computational fluid dynamic software as well as velocity prediction software was deployed to analyse *Svea* and make comparisons with the existing Js. With a flush deck layout, no deckhouses and a minimalist interior, she will surely be one of the most stunning J-Class yachts to date.

*Svea* racing layout



Hull Rainbow at HJB yard

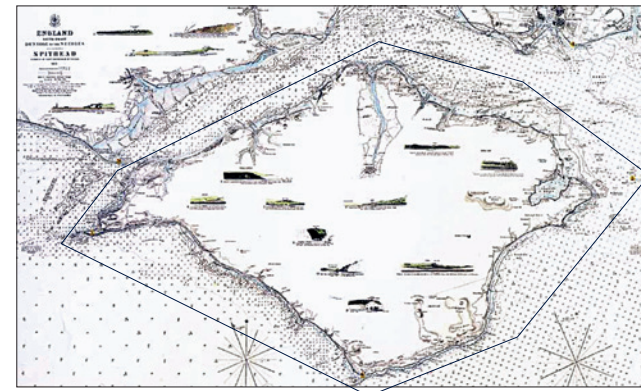
Hull construction (*Atlantis*)  
Turning the hull of (*Atlantis*)



## 2012 J-CLASS REGATTAS IN THE UK



*Velsheda in 2008*



*1851 Hundred Guinea Cup race*

*Svea* probably will first test her performance against the other J-Class yachts during the Falmouth Regatta, four races organised by the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club. The following yachts are also expected to be present: *Shamrock V* (1930), *Velsheda* (1933), *Endeavour* (1934), *Ranger* (2002), *Hanuman* (2009), *Lionheart* (2010), *Rainbow* (2012) *Yankee* (2012) and *Atlantis* (2012).

In July 2012 the Solent Regatta (two races) will take place at the historic home of the British J-Class fleet. There will also be a 53 nautical mile race for the 1851 Hundred Guinea Cup sailing around the Isle of Wight. These events are expected to attract thousands of spectators on the headlands and vantage points close to the race courses.

*Ranger and Velsheda in serious competition*

After the J-Class regattas are finished *Svea* will be available for charter.

